

Message Text

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ACTION EPA-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-07 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5204

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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FOR EPA

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: SENV CCMS XT OVIP DA

SUBJ: CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN DENMARK

1. GENERALLY SPEAKING, ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION IN DENMARK IS NOT AS SEVERE AS IN OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, OWING LARGELY TO LONG-STANDING DANISH EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING HIGH QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT. DANISH ATTENTION IS DIRECTED TOWARD A POLICY OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES WITH ACCOMPANYING EFFORTS AIMED AT REDUCING ECONOMIC WASTE.

2. THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OF PRIMARY CONCERN ARE AIR AND WATER POLLUTION. EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE HAS RECENTLY BEEN DEVOTED TO THE POLLUTION OF WATER CAUSED BY THE DUMPING OF CHEMICAL WASTES AND BY OIL SPILLS. A NEW REQUIREMENT INSTITUTED IN 1977 THAT ALL CHEMICAL WASTES MUST BE DESTROYED BY A CENTRAL DISPOSAL PLANT HAS STRENGTHENED POLLUTION CONTROLS. POLLUTION OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC IS ALSO OF SERIOUS CONCERN, AND DENMARK PARTICIPATES WITH THE OTHER BALTIC NATIONS TO CLEAN UP THAT BODY OF WATER. COMMENT: THE ISSUE OF POSSIBLE DRINKING WATER CONTAMINATION CAUSED BY IMPROPER DISPOSAL OF CHEMICAL WASTES HAS
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GENERATED CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC OUTCRY. GIVEN THE DANISH GOVERNMENT'S AVOWED COMMITMENT TO HIGH QUALITY DRINKING WATER, EMBASSY SUGGESTS COSTLE DISCUSS THE LACK OF DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE CCMS DRINKING WATER PILOT STUDY.

3. CONCERN FOR TRANSNATIONAL AIR POLLUTION AND NUCLEAR POWER HAZARDS WAS HIGHLIGHTED MOST RECENTLY BY A DEMONSTRATION AGAINST

THE BARSEBACK NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN SOUTHERN SWEDEN ON SEP 10.
APPROXIMATELY 7000 OF THE 12-15000 DEMONSTRATORS WERE DANES
VOICING THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE PLANT, WHICH IS ONLY 13 MILES
AWAY FROM COPENHAGEN ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE ORESUND, AS A
POSSIBLY DANGEROUS SOURCE OF POLLUTION FOR THE ENTIRE AREA.
DANISH OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR POWER IS SO MARKED THAT THE
GOVERNMENT IS DELAYING THE DECISION TO CONSTRUCT NUCLEAR POWER
PLANTS PENDING FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE HAZARDS INVOLVED.
COMMENT: DANES ARE EXPLORING ALTERNATE SOURCES OF ENERGY,
ESPECIALLY NATURAL GAS FROM THE NORTH SEA, BUT NUCLEAR ENERGY
REMAINS A CLEAR OPTION. COSTLE MAY WISH TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS
OF NUCLEAR POWER WITH THE DANISH DELEGATES.

4. DANES ARE WELL AWARE OF THE NEED TO SET HIGH STANDARDS FOR
THE QUALITY OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT, AND THEY SHARE THE US CONCERN
TO PRESERVE THE SEA AND THE AIR.
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